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# Australiaâ??s 2026 Winegrape Crush Falls to Lowest Level Since 2000 Amid Weak Global Demand

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**The decline in production was observed across all major wine-producing states and regions, indicating that weak global market conditions continue to affect Australia's wine sector**

Australia's winegrape crush dropped to 1.27 million tonnes in 2026, marking its smallest harvest since 2000, according to Wine Australia's National Vintage Report 2026. Despite the significantly lower production, grape prices remained under pressure, highlighting continued weakness in domestic and global wine demand.

The 2026 crush was down 300,000 tonnes (19 per cent) from the 2025 vintage and stood 25 per cent below the 10-year average of 1.69 million tonnes. The reduced harvest equates to approximately 33 million fewer 9-litre cases of wine.

According to Peter Bailey, Manager – Market Insights at Wine Australia, while seasonal challenges such as flooding in inland wine-growing regions affected production, the primary driver behind the lower crush was a deliberate adjustment by growers and winemakers to align supply with changing market conditions.

"There have now been four vintages in a row below the long-term average, suggesting an underlying reset in the tonnage of grapes required by winemakers to meet changing global demand," Bailey said.

Red grape varieties accounted for the majority of the decline. The red grape crush fell by 243,560 tonnes (29 per cent) year-on-year, reaching its lowest level since 2000. In comparison, white grape production declined by a more modest 62,774 tonnes (9 per cent).

As a result, white grapes represented 53 per cent of the total crush, making 2026 only the second year in the past 12 years in which white varieties accounted for the majority of Australia's winegrape harvest.

Bailey attributed this shift to changing global consumption patterns.

"Globally, red wine has declined at twice the rate of white wine since 2017 and is now nearly 450 million cases lower than it was in that year, according to IWSR. The flow-on effect is that demand for red grapes in Australia has reduced more significantly than for whites," he said.

The decline in production was observed across all major wine-producing states and regions, indicating that weak global market conditions continue to affect Australia's wine sector, irrespective of regional differences in climate, grape varieties, or production systems.

Despite the smaller harvest, growers did not experience improved returns. The average value of purchased grapes fell to AUD 570 per tonne, a 6 per cent decline from 2025.

Price reductions were recorded across both warm inland and cool/temperate regions and affected both red and white varieties. White grapes grown in warm inland regions experienced the sharpest decline, with average prices falling 12 per cent, while cool/temperate red and white grapes each declined by 3 per cent. Warm inland red grapes recorded a comparatively smaller 1 per cent decrease.

Bailey noted that the continued decline in grape prices, despite lower production volumes that are expected to reduce wine inventories, reflects persistent softness in demand.

"There has been no improvement in grape prices, which suggests that demand is still very soft. It is concerning that there is no sign of recovery for reds despite such a significant adjustment, and that prices for whites are also now declining," he said.

The latest vintage report underscores the ongoing structural changes in Australia's wine industry as producers continue to adjust production strategies in response to evolving global consumption trends and prolonged market pressures.